

**RELIGIOUS POLEMICS  
BETWEEN THE EASTERN AND WESTERN  
CHURCH IN SERMONS,  
AND IN DIALOGICAL EDIFYING TEXTS  
IN 1741 AND 1743**

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In the context of 18th Christian sermons and teaching, the polemical insistence of the Dominican Vicko M. Gučetić and the Franciscan Stjepan Vilov on the correctness of only one creed and Church, while all others were "lying", is shown as a logical phenomenon based on the teaching about one God and one Church - *Unus Deus, una fides* - coupled with the imperative for recognition of one head of the Church - *Unum corpus, unus spiritus*.

The poems written by A. Kačić Miošić in the folk decasyllabic form, and the decasyllabic poems which later appeared at the middle of the 19th century, inspired by Kačić's *Libar*, together with S. Vilov's polemical dialogical-edifying booklet, popularised theological polemics between the Eastern and Western church and registered conflicts concerning Church unity on the broadest social plane. Popularisation of theological polemics narrowed the gap between the faith of the masses and theology, and brought it down to the level of popular faith and what the populace said about faith, this phenomenon being, unquestionably, part of the popular Baroque.

Nowadays, intellectuals are almost completely lacking theological education, or have very little of it (Denis de Rougemont writes of the phenomenon of contemporary barbarism).<sup>1</sup> To them, religious polemics between the Eastern and Western Church, particularly in the 18th, but also in the 19th century, conducted orally or in print in sermons and published books of sermons, and in edifying tracts like that by the Franciscan, Stjepan Vilov (Vilov 1741) and the sermons of the Dubrovnik Dominican, Vicko M. Gučetić (Gučetić 1743), may seem like a ultimately unimportant discussion about the *Filioque*: such as whether the Holy Spirit originates from the Father and the Son or only from the Father (through the Son); does Purgatory exist or not; is only one creed right or are the teachings of all faiths correct, which would include the issue of heresy; about the Virgin Mary's immaculate conception and assumption into heaven; on celebration of the Eucharist with the use of unleavened bread; about the fast on Saturday and the foodstuffs which are considered permissible during fasting.

At first glance, these were theological questions about which the broadest auditorium received instruction through sermons, while the sermons which were published for readers and as assistance to other preachers, intrude in diverse cultural spheres. With dissemination into all the strata of the Church's members, it was unavoidable that a lowering of the theoretical and/or theological level ensued, which also led to "practical" attempts - ethnic conflicts, in fact - being made locally for establishment of Church unity. There was a negation of religious differences, which will be discussed further in connection with the decasyllabic poems written in the 19th century in the Makarska coastal region, the model for the verses in the popular and well-loved book of poems by Andrija Kačić Miošić,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The thought of the West and its vocabulary were born out of the theological discussions during the centuries of the original Church. Our music, sculpture and painting are born in the church choir stalls, while our poetry was compiled in the aura of the Manichaen sect. Right up until the great modern philosophers - Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Auguste Comte and Marx - there was not one who did not assume, at least in the beginning, a theological position. Neglect of theology means to interrupt the most fruitful tradition of Western culture. That means to sentence oneself to renewed search, without one even knowing it, for the spiritual discoveries which formed us, for centuries now, the Fathers of the Church and the great heretics. The theological simplicity of our century is one of the most significant advantages of the new barbarism. It could only be compared with the type of intellectual caries which prevents us from chewing on and digesting our spiritual experience" (Rougemont 1995:102–103).

<sup>2</sup> After the first edition of Kačić's *Pleasant Conversation ...* in 1756 and/or after three editions in the 18th century, the most lively frequency of printing of Kačić's "*Libar*" followed in the 19th century editions: in 1801, 1811, 1816, 1826, 1836, 1838, 1839, 1846, 1850, 1851, 1861, 1862, 1871, 1875, 1880, 1882, 1885, 1886, 1889, 1900, which gives an indication of the reaction of the reading public and of the success of the

*Razgovor ugodni naroda slovinskoga* [*Pleasant Conversation of the Slavic People*, first edition: Venice 1756], the first to provide edifying poems in the popular decasyllabic verse about the Church schism, the *Greek haughtiness* which led to the fall of Constantinople<sup>3</sup> and about the synods in Ferrara and Florence, thus popularising theological polemics for the broadest stratum raised on oral literary tradition:

They argued reedily and high,  
They spoke with knowledge and great depth:  
From the origins of the Holy Spirit,  
To the authority of the Latin Pope,  
From the cleansing of righteous souls,  
To the sacredness of the wheat bread;  
And others spoke a great deal,  
Declaiming nicely at the synod.<sup>4</sup>

Attention in this article is directed mainly to the relation between the Eastern and Western Churches, a relation which has marked the Eastern and Western cultural sphere in our part of the world, and, in accordance with that, the broad membership of both cultures who lived - and continue to live - mixed in a similar linguistic region.

The Eastern Schism, as J. J. Strossmayer so correctly pointed out, could more appropriately be called the Slavic Schism, as it was the cause of constant tensions between members of one Church and the other, who had, through history, attained cultural and ethnic identity on the basis of that membership.

The conflicts between the faithful of the Western and Eastern Churches, composed in the folk decasyllabic verse modeled on the poems of Andrija Kačić Miošić, can be found in the collection of poems collected by the monk, Gašpar Bujas, in the book called *Kačić's Imitators in the Makarska Littoral Until the mid-Nineteenth Century* (Bujas 1971), with data on the authors of the poems and an extensive foreword. Among the poems by Father Frane Radman (1722–1789) is one about how a *harambaša*, a bandit chief from Imotski, *works* on the issue of Church unity without sermonising:

"A poem about how Ivan Rošo converts the Greeks to the holy faith without talking, and begins":

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book; it was also well-known and well-loved among the illiterate who knew the poems from his *Libar* by heart.

<sup>3</sup> Poem 46, *Turci zauzimaju Carigrad 1453* [The Turks Taking Constantinople 1453] in Kačić Miošić 1983:193–199.

<sup>4</sup> Poem 45, *Car Konstantin i papa Nikola V* [Emperor Constantine and Pope Nicholas V] in Kačić Miošić 1983:191.

He does not raise his sword without reason,  
Sees first of all if they are Greek believers,  
They who say Latin prayers correctly,  
They readily escape from death.  
But who does not and falls into his hands,  
He speedily cuts the head from his shoulders.  
Blessed are they for on this Earth was born  
The one who would lead them to Salvation.  
(...)  
He blesses five of their houses,  
The devilish nets of their kinsmen,  
The heirs of Luther, Focius,  
Marcus Ephesius and even Acacius.  
Worse than the wolf when he chases the fox  
Because he wants there to be but one faith."<sup>5</sup>

The saying of members of the Eastern Orthodox faith: "*Volijem se poturčiti, nego pošokčiti!*" [I'd rather become a Turk, than a Šokac!], was registered in the religious polemics in the Croatian lands between the Eastern and Western churches.<sup>6</sup> Antun Kanižlić provided a variant of the saying (Kanižlić 1780:846): "*Bolje se poturčiti, nego porimiti!*" [Better to become a Turk, than a Roman]. Antun Kanižlić also noted down the existence of a contrary saying: "May God strike down the one who separated us!". A interesting and similar example - a childhood memory - was mentioned by Johann Huizinga in his article "My Journey Into History".<sup>7</sup>

The basis of polemics lies in the Eastern Schism which came about in 1054,<sup>8</sup> while the Western Schism took place from 1378 until 1417.

<sup>5</sup> Bujas 1971:217–218. a similar example can be found in Poem IV: *The miserable Orthodox Christians! Haven't seen the liturgy since last year./ They go to the Latin Church! And get to know the Roman priests* (Bujas 1971:211).

<sup>6</sup> Šokac is the term for a Roman Catholic, ethnic Croatian inhabitant of the regions of Slavonia, Srijem, or Bačka.

<sup>7</sup> "We also had a penny from the time of the Maritime Beggars, which was made of lead and bore the inscription: '**Sooner Turks, than Papists**', currency issued during the time of the siege of Groningen 1672 (...)" (Huizinga 1955:110–111).

<sup>8</sup> "In 1274 at the Tenth Ecumenical Synod in Lyon (France), an attempt was made to establish the unity of the Eastern and Western Churches, but it was not to last.. The adherents of the Eastern Church were to retain the use of their rituals and liturgy, but they had to recognise the primate of the pope and the *Filioque* insertion in the Nicean-Constantinople Creed.

At the synod at Ferrara and Florence, 1438–1439, the unity of the Eastern and Western Churches was solemnly proclaimed on July 6, 1439 by the bull *Laetentur coeli*, but this too did not prevail. The *Filioque* insertion was once again accepted, and with it the uniform stance on the teachings about Purgatory, the use of unleavened bread, etc. When the Turks were in the immediate vicinity of Constantinople, Constantine XII the Paleologist turned for help to Pope Nicholas V (1447–1455). A decree on unity was promulgated in the church of Sancta Sophia on December 12, 1452, during a mass which was celebrated according to the Roman rite by the papal legate, Isidor from Kiev - despite the opposition from the priesthood and a part of the populous. The first

The polemicists of the 18th century often mentioned the Eastern Schism, but today, even to theologians themselves, the direct and indirect causes of the schism sometimes seem less important - particularly in contemporary discussions and lectures - than the consequences. Bearing in mind a number of attempts made to establish Church unity, right up until the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the schism was presented as a historical fact which was hard to explain. In conjunction with the complex historical circumstances, the initial theological disagreements produced disproportionate consequences; globally speaking, the clash between Eastern and Western culture became fully manifested. Reflection points to the modern theory of deterministic chaos according to which a slight initial error can produce unforeseeable after-effects.<sup>9</sup> Theological differences provided only a starting-point for crystallisation of different possibilities of opinion and different worldviews.

The protagonists of the Schism, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Mikhail Cerularia (patriarch from 1043 to 1058) and the papal legate, Cardinal Humbert, bishop of the small diocese of Silva Candida on the outskirts of Rome, have been described by the modern historian, the Dominican Franjo Šanjek, as "incapable of dialogue and understanding"; of course, this need for dialogue emerges from the ecumenical perspectives of our times.<sup>10</sup>

However, 18th century polemics were conducted with the objective of convincing the opposite side, through logic, that there was only one true creed, and all others, as well as various other forms of interpretation of Christianity, were *untrue creeds* or "lažive vjere" [of lying faith], as Vicko Marija Gučetić wrote in 1743.

In his expansive twenty-ninth sermon published in the book *Riječ Božja* [The Word of God, Gučetić 1743], V. M. Gučetić showed how the validity of the Roman Catholic faith had to be proved (considering it a duty to "reprimand - a brother sinner"), in discussions with Christians, pagans, atheists, Jews, Turks, with Lutherans, Calvinists, Huguenots, Deists,

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senator of the empire stated: "We will rather bear the Turkish turban than accept the cap of Rome." /PG 157, 1071/. On May 30, Mehmed II the Conqueror entered the Church of Sancta Sophia mounted on his horse."

(Quotation taken from the text : *Istočni raskol (1054) i odnosi rimske i carigradske crkve kroz stoljeća* [The Eastern Schism (1054) and relations of the churches of Rome and Constantinople through the centuries]. Copies of the text were distributed by Father Franjo Šanjek, D.D., in the 1985/86 school year, for the purposes of a lecture at the Institute for the Theological Culture of Laymen in Zagreb (pp. 6–7).

<sup>9</sup> The so-called *butterfly effect* is well known: the flapping of a butterfly's wings on one side of the globe can cause a storm on the other side of the Earth.

<sup>10</sup> Quotation from the text mentioned in footnote 8, p 1.

Shismatists and all heretics "who may be up until the end of the world".<sup>11</sup> Gučetić's sermon has an edifying and polemic, and apologetic character and seem to us today like a brief history of the battle for supremacy of canonic Christian teaching over various heretic currents and other religions. Actually it is an apologetic tract, of the theological text-book type, deriving from the tradition of the Christian literary genre of the apology which marked the beginning of Christian theology in the 2nd century, the genre in literature "from which the apologetics developed much later as a separate theological discipline" (Šagi-Bunić 1976:238).

T. J. Šagi-Bunić emphasises that an important characteristic in common of apologetic literature in the literary sense is represented by its *addressees*. With apologetic literature, Christians addressed themselves for the first time to those who were not only uninformed, but also adversaries and enemies of Christianity. A second characteristic mentioned by Šagi-Bunić is the fact that apologetic literature "addresses the more elevated circles of society at that time, intellectuals, and particularly, the powers-that-be (2nd century)" (Šagi-Bunić 1976:238).

A sermon, and edifying and apologetic review of the polemical situation, which V. M. Gučetić felt the need to write - prior to and subsequently to - oral sermonising, came into being in the 18th century, an era of general erudition and the power of persuasiveness, faith in Man's reason and susceptibility to the power of argument, Nature and the world, at a time when literary and theoretical research was being done: by (M. P. Katančić), with biographical research work (T. Mikloušić) and historical research of the Croatian language (dictionaries, grammars).

A particularly interesting fact provided by the Dominican Agostin Đurđević is that Vicko Marija Gučetić (1682(?)–1771) was a zealous and enthusiastic mathematician<sup>12</sup> which led to his exceptional aptitude for logic and mathematical proofs and conclusions. He directly mentioned the characteristic of numbers - infinity - as an argument in favour of the existence of God:

<sup>11</sup> In the book's index, the content of the sermon i.e. the Conversation, is specified: "According to the commandments of our God Jesus Christ we are obliged to reprimand our brother sinner: we are taught the ways in which to [carry out] this reprimand. And thus the manner in which we are to reprimand Christians, the way with pagans, the way with atheists, the way with Jews, the way with Turks, the way with Lutherans, the way with Calvinists, the way with Huguenots, the way with Latitudinarians or Deists and all other heretics which have appeared and which may be from now on until the end of the world. By our rational reprimand and by our wise teaching we gloriously and bravely convert all the infidels mentioned above, telling them obviously and clearly that theirs is a **false faith**."

"the uncountable causes can never be reached by definite numbers"  
(Gučetić 1743:362, col. 1. The entire passage will be quoted later).

The polemic nature of Gučetić's sermons, "*defence against infidelity*" is demonstrated as an indivisible part of the dialogue nature of the sermons through which the preacher addresses his congregation, with whom he is in a constant dialogue *current of consciousness*, just as Gučetić addresses his readers, primarily future parish priests, bearing in mind the need for assistance in composing sermons.

I mention the genre roots of Gučetić's polemical sermons, "defences" not only in relation to the apologetic origin, but also with the intention of research of the process of secularisation of the literary type of polemics which endures and develops within religious literature and the religious literary type of sermon; in that context, the polemics develops with the purposes of popularisation of Christian learning, most frequently on a popular literary level, or, it could be said, in the sphere of the folk Baroque (Zečević 1995; 1991; 1993).

Secularisation and the inauguration of the polemics literary genre can be observed in the context of broadening of the social community, of the educated and uneducated strata whom the preachers addressed with theological polemics.

Vicko M. Gučetić undertook the comprehensive task of providing a review of the "manner" of persuasion to be applied to sinners of all types (the word in Croatian is *uvjeriti* or *u-vjeriti*, meaning to *lead into the right* faith). Just as one God exists, so only one true faith can exist: *Unus Deus, una fides*.

Gučetić's apologetic sermon, as is mentioned in one source, is a defence of the strict, orthodox Roman Catholic faith, and in the literary sense changes the characteristic of apologetic literature to address the upper strata of society (particularly intellectuals), so as to adjust i.e. popularise the level of the examples, the arguments which logically prove the one and only possible religious truth; and the comparison between the ox and the donkey emerges, as shown below. The sermon as a whole confirms the conviction held in the 18th century concerning the power of persuasion and the possibility that Man (Society) could be re-educated on the basis of the principles of reason.

"Our soul is all in reason and wisdom, this is its only crown and the celebrated difference as compared with the ox and the donkey; thus, it is in God himself as its creator that the soul finds its wisdom and

<sup>12</sup> "Appassionato cultore delle matematiche, per molti anni qui ne tenne scuola delle medesime. In pari tempo era salito in fama di dotto ed esimo sacro oratore" (Giurgevich 1867:14–15).

everything it yearns to know, it shall rest in Him as in its peace, as in its blessedness, because the blessedness of our soul rushes to no other, but to know all the Divine Knowledge of which it had in this world only **dark knowledge** (emphasis, D. Z.) and as our soul after the death of its body shall be similar to an angel in His Spirit, so shall it be like Him in its knowledge which is happy in no other than in reason itself which enjoys not in anything other than in knowledge itself, because neither knowledge nor reason are appropriate to anyone except to the soul, to an angel and to God..." (Gučetić 1743:363, col. 1–2).

The 18th century faith in human reason understood its origins to be in supreme and supranatural reason:

"This order of the entire world obviously and clearly states that there is only one supreme intellect, because only intellect itself and reason itself can produce order" (Gučetić 1743:362, col. 2.; 363, col. 1.).

Through oral and written (printed) sermons, the chasm was lessened between the faith of the common man and scientific theology, and it was brought down to a level nearer to the faith of the common man and the way he spoke about his faith. The examples given by V. M. Gučetić often seem drastic and extremely polemic, but were in accordance with the precepts of sermons in the 18th century, in which the sermons were full of examples with frightening punishment of sinners. Particularly drastic was the description and attack on the "lying Turkish faith" which, at that time of general danger from Ottoman incursions, was no isolated example; namely, preachers often made harsh attacks on "the Turks" and/or Ottomans:

"... so the Turks unconsciously create a Garden of Paradise, a swine's paradise where they merrily drink and eat as though the human soul is a non-soul, but a swine's stink; as though a man is a non-man, but a odorous swine who only enjoys being in a pigsty" (Gučetić 1743:363, col. 1.).

In the Croatian literature of the second half of the 19th century, one still finds drastic and bitter descriptions of the Ottomans and their faith e.g. in Franjo Marković's drama about King Zvonimir (Marković 1877).

V. M. Gučetić introduces what could be considered a blasphemous but, in fact, popular argument against atheists; on the example of the "donkey" he explains the legitimacy of the questions of God's existence in the world:

"In the same way one converts atheists who say there is neither God nor Gods. How is there no God when one sees obviously and clearly God's creature on this earth? If there were no God, and that the one and only God, there would be no heaven and earth, no man, no ox, no donkey. Because, the donkey in itself might be not caused by any



cause, or caused it might be. If it is not caused, thus the donkey is God, for a cause which is not caused is called God. If it is caused, it is not caused by innumerable causes, because an infinite number of causes cannot be reached, and so not one creature would be caused.

Thus it is caused by one initial cause. Thus, as we obviously see both the sky and the earth, and Man and the ox, a created creature, it must be said that there is one God who is an uncaused cause and the Creator of all of his creation..." (Gučetić 1743:362, col. 1.).

Today we would say that V. M. Gučetić explained and partly saw the diversity and differences in interpretation of Christian teaching also as the fundamental question of interpretation of the texts of the Bible<sup>13</sup> which, like any text prior to its being read, consequently, prior to fully determined reading, is simply letters on paper:

"And so as to convert better these heretics, answer me that, oh Luther, and you, oh Calvin, with which faith do you believe that that book is God's writing and God's words? Who told you that the Gospels were sacred? Who bears witness of this to you? Who judges it for you? No, really not one book is sacred, because these books are dead, because these are letters without a soul!

Consequently, you cannot in any way believe this Bible to which you bow, but because the sacred Church, a sacred communion inspired by the living word of God, speaks to you with the Spirit of Jesus Christ, testifies to you that the book is God's Word. It is as Saint Augustin said: I would never have believed the Gospels if the Church had not said, if the Church had not judged that they are the Gospels; and may all be damned, continued Augustin, and may all be damned who regard any other writing to be God's Words which the Holy Church casts aside" (Gučetić 1743:374, col. 1–2.).

In the context of Gučetić's sermons, damnation is called down, directly and indirectly, on those who do not believe in the supreme reason to which Man's soul aspires in its endeavours to free itself of the body. V. M. Gučetić compares the body with material such as wood which burns out, while the soul is the fire which dreams "fire itself", in fact the dream of the alchemists. These are traces of that alchemy and the alchemist's aim towards clean, purified flame which would be freed of the impurities of material - wood, the body - the dream of conversion of material into the pure flame of the soul (which, in the 18th century, meant the flame of Reason and Faith):

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<sup>13</sup> "... consequently, it is necessary to say that our Holy Church retaining the real and true Spirit of Jesus Christ, judges in the Bible, and as it judges what is the Holy Word, so does the same Spirit judge her, on how and in which way to understand Holy Word, for that same Spirit which selects Holy Word, that same Spirit understands Holy Word, and so that same Spirit truly and correctly interprets to us the Holy Word, when it seems to us that the Holy Words conflict with each other." (Gučetić 1743:374, col. 2.).

"...but this flame, because it is in wood, dies out, when it does not have its own wood. Therefore, if we could take the flame not from the burning stone or wood, but create a flame clean in itself, neither mixed with nor contained in other things, that flame in a natural manner would at that moment rise towards the heavens and would join with its enflamed environment as a *clean flame with its pure flame where it would never be extinguished*, because that flame would peacefully rest and happily remain in the purity of its flame as in its natural state.

In the same manner as flame with flame, so our soul separating itself from its impure body and all its bodily lusts yearns for no other, desires no other, hurtles towards no other but that its wisdom be joined with the original Wisdom, its knowledge with the original Knowledge, its reason with the original reason which is God..." (Gučetić 1743:363, col. 2.—364, col. 1.).

From this line of thought, from the aspiration to the supreme and supranatural mind, reason, the conclusion about the mendacity of other faiths follows:

"There, now you obviously see, oh Christians, that the Koran, the Turkish law, is an meaningless law, because just as it creates a Swine's Paradise, so does it create a Swine's Soul!"

The threats of Hell and hellish torment, characteristic to 18th century sermons, also appear in V. M. Gučetić's sermons with the listing of arguments that the Russian Church (the *Muscovites*) should recognise the Pope as the supreme leader, otherwise:

"... it will cause (you) a greater fire in the flames of Hell because of your haughty disobedience" (Gučetić 1743:407, col. 2.). The punishment of Hell means the loss of Heaven, the loss of the soul: "those of you who do not subject yourselves to the Pope of Rome, will not be buried, will surely lose your souls; thus, all you Schismatics, if a spark of reason glows within you, would bless and bow down to the Pope of Rome, if you aspired to enjoying the beauties of Heaven" (Gučetić 1743:410, col. 1.).

If they do not bow down to the pope, they will show themselves to the whole world: "[as] complete and insolent liars, with two hearts and two tongues" (Gučetić 1743:408, col. 1.). Such harsh words indicate the identifiable characteristic of the polemics literary genre. The commonplace of all these religious polemics is "*the Greek haughtiness*" as the cause of the Schism; the haughtiness was punished by the fall of Constantinople, of which A. Kačić Miošić wrote in verse. With all their offensives, the Turks i.e. the Ottomans did not manage to take Constantinople; "infidels" cannot destroy a bastion of Christianity without great cause. From the walls, the Greeks mock the Turks, saying that they are cowards, but the Turks are not only the enemy ("infidels") but also the terrible executors of God's justice. By their *haughtiness*, the Greeks try

God's patience. Apart from the Greeks, only one additional category can be haughty - and that is women! Kačić established the same reason for the Turkish victory in the fall of Drvenik in 1687.<sup>14</sup>

V. M. Gučetić explained how it was justified that through their refusal to recognise the authority of the pope:

"... you are called, and are, *haughty Schismatics and outlaws*, and that is why you are separated from us and from our true Church" (Gučetić 1743:401, col. 2.—402, col. 1.).

The Church Schism was explained in the context of popularisation of Christian teaching on Man's dual nature as the consequence of the neo-Platonic division of Man into "body" and "soul"; sins against the soul/spirit are more serious than those against the body. Such, writes Gučetić, is the *consilium* with the pope, one body with a head "which exudes with one spirit, which speaks in one Holy Spirit. *Unum corpus, unus Spiritus*" (Gučetić 1743:404, col. 1.).

By not recognising the authority of the pope, the body is decapitated, a dead body without a soul: "A Church without a head is a trunk, it is not a living body (...)", therefore, a *consilium* without a head "does not live with God's Spirit, and is a dead body" (Gučetić 1743:404, col. 1.) Everybody is obliged to recognise the authority of the pope, for: "there is only one Christ, one faith, one head, therefore we must all be kept under the same head" (Gučetić 1743:401, col. 2.).

The threat of punishment, especially in the 18th century sermons, was an inescapable means of admonition to outlaws from the pope, which in this context meant and from the Holy Spirit, that is they erred primarily, against the Holy Spirit and the soul:

"The fires of Hell shall torture you more than your pupils who blindly follow your teaching, because you do not give them real Christian teaching, because you, too, are incapable of it..." (Gučetić 1743:404, col. 1–2.).

The call to them to return to the aegis of the pope's authority, is a call for salvation of the soul:

"Hear me well, you angry outlaws, because I speak for the benefit of your souls: in vain you pray to God, in vain you keep the fast, in vain you make your confessions, in vain you take Communion, all conceitedly and to no avail..." (Gučetić 1743:404, col. 2.).

In Gučetić's sermons we also encounter a saying mentioned by A. Kanižlić:

<sup>14</sup> "A poem follows about the fort of Drvenik in the upper Littoral, on how the Turks conquered it on the 15th of April 1687" (Kačić Miošić 1983:396).

"May God strike down the first one who separated us. He sinned grievously against God, we now do not sin. All Vlachs start to respond in this way. Then I say to him: Both they and you, sin grievously against God, because from your unreasonable behaviour you care little for your one and only miserable soul" (Gučetić 1743:410, col. 1.).

In his dialogical-edifying booklet, Stjepan Vilov, a Franciscan monk, denoted infidelity [*nevirstvo*] as the greatest sin committed against the spirit. He referred to Paul's Epistle to the Romans, freely translating the sense of the text of the Epistle:

"I, consequently, serve the law of God with my mind, and the law of sin with my body." (7): "... because the spirit is the opposite of the flesh, and the flesh the opposite of the spirit" (Vilov 1741:56).

Kačić wrote against infidelity as the greatest evil to have come out of the *Greek haughtiness*, which Stjepan Vilov, too, emphasised as being the beginning of the Schism.<sup>15</sup>

And while the sermons had the nature of a dialogue, the preacher is addressing a congregation, interpreting the Bible and giving instruction on the Christian way of life, directly or indirectly provides the answers to the questions and needs of the everyday life. Stjepan Vilov's<sup>16</sup> booklet (Vilov 1741) is a presentation of an edifying direct dialogue between Francesco, a Franciscan monk (Stjepan Vilov) and Theodore (Todor) a layman *ristjanin*, of the Orthodox Christian faith, a member of the Eastern Church.

The booklet opens with a discussion of a dialogical-edifying booklet by the same author, Stjepan Vilov, which had been published previously, in which he had tried to convince and instruct members of the Eastern Church concerning the need for the everyday religiously imbued greeting, *Hvaljen Isus* [Jesus Be Praised], which he contended that Orthodox believers should use in common with members of the Western Church: *Razgovor prijateljski među krstjaninom i ristjaninom pod menom Franceska i Theodora nad plemenitim i ugodnim nazivanjem "Faljen Isus"* [A Friendly Conversation Between a Christian and an Orthodox Christian Called Francesco and Theodore Concerning the Noble and Pleasant Greeting, *Jesus Be Praised*] (Buda, 1736).<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> "...when the (Greeks) started coming in with their unrest and haughtiness above the regent of Jesus Christ" (Vilov 1741:30).

<sup>16</sup> Stjepan Vilov, a Franciscan from Bosna Srebrena, born in Buda around 1685; died in Buda November 5, 1747 (or 1743). He was a preacher in Buda, lector at the theological faculty in Osijek, and then in Buda, general lector at the Franciscan university of the entire province of Bosna Srebrena. Data from the book by Ivan Alilović (Alilović 1986:40).

<sup>17</sup> I was unable to locate the 1736 booklet by Stjepan Vilov.

The reaction of the broad stratum of the *ristjanin* believers, adherents to the Orthodox Christian faith, for whom the instruction on the greeting was intended and which Stjepan Vilov wrote about, is of considerable interest and value:

"... I saw a reader of those booklets in which you printed our discussion about the Jesus praises greeting. He was reading it and laughing, shaking his head, calling others in the company to laugh, throwing it aside, calling it unworthy of reading, talking others into not reading it, when he sees it in someone's hands he tears it away from them and acts as one whose brain has been scorched by flame and who has been separated from his senses" (Vilov 1741:5).

The reception to Stjepan Vilov's booklet among the Orthodox Christian population is also described by development of metaphor: the author became "black in their eyes", and Theodore says:

"I heard from others that you became all black (...) I heard that you frightened people and children along the roadways so much that you had to go across the sea to some place called Africa where there are no white people" (Vilov 1741:3–4).

Reactions to the booklet which instructs Orthodox believers to use the *Jesus Be Praised* greeting was also determined geographically, listing the places which Theodore had travelled through:

"Everywhere I heard endlessly that you had overturned your face" and mentioned: Vukovar, Ilok, Šarengrad, Varadin, Belgrade and "further still" (Vilov 1741:4).

Theodore tried to use the *Jesus Be Praised* greeting, but gave up because the Orthodox believers told him:

"Should I become a *Šokac*, should I abandon my Orthodox faith into which I was born and not keep to that which my mother and father taught me?" (Vilov 1741:7).

Stjepan Vilov knew very well the environment in which he was active so that Theodore speaks about the Orthodox faithful not abandoning their customary greetings: *Good day. Good morning. Good Evening*:

"Even if I say *Jesus Be Praised* a thousand times to somebody, he will answer as he has been taught ..." (Vilov 1741:7).

The entire dialogical-edifying booklet is written as a conversation between a theologically educated Franciscan and an uninformed Orthodox layman, in order to prove the lack of basis for the saying of members of the Orthodox Christian Church:

"The faith into which I was born, is the one in which I will die, too."

Francesco polemically contends this customary [*običajna*] saying among Orthodox believers is: insulting, monstrous, foolish, monstrous (again), unreasoned, (deriving from) ignorance and blindness; and for the third time: as monstrous as the monster from Banat (Vilov 1741:11), which probably refers to some deformed creature living at that time whose reputation had spread; *freak* shows were common at fairs.

Stjepan Vilov also takes a polemical attitude to the name of the other faith, providing etymological interpretation of the meaning of the word *pravoslavni* [literally: *pravo* - real, true, and *slava* - jubilation, celebration, or glory], an interpretation which he attributes to Theodore, namely, that in the Orthodox faith: "to be born and to die is a real celebration (or glory)". Francesco replies that they perhaps see the glory in the naked, newly born children or even in those who are above other people i.e. on the gallows.<sup>18</sup> Instead of the word - gallows - in another place Francesco metonymically says that, because of incorrectly comprehended mercies: "man climbs lightly onto that Greek letter *Π* (P)" (Vilov 1741:53).

Stjepan Vilov's booklet, with a total of 126 pages (format: 10.5 x 16.5 cm) shows how only one faith can be the real, correct and true one, while other faiths cannot be true, so they are false non-faiths. On this basis, he shows the lack of foundation and error of the saying:

"The faith in which I was born, will be the faith I shall die in, too":

"... it cannot be that my faith is good to me, and your faith is good to you; but it must be either that mine is good - to you and to me; or your's is good - to you and to me" (Vilov 1741:58).

The exclusive correctness of only one faith (and Church) on the principle of: "either - or", was a characteristic attitude in the teachings and sermons of the 18th century, the choice always being dramatic: either *everything* or *nothing*, either Salvation or Hell (Zečević 1993). Proof excludes the possibility of co-existence of not only one and the other faith and/or Church, but of all other faiths, excluding "either - or":

"You should know that you cannot, if you are at all wise, say anywhere that: the truth is that I am now living and the truth is again that I am not now living. In the same way it cannot be that you can say: and the truth is that the Communion is proper with unleavened bread, and again, that the truth is that Communion is impossible with unleavened bread. Also, the truth is that the Holy Spirit comes out of the Son, and again, the truth is that the Holy Spirit does not come out

<sup>18</sup> "As it is a real celebration to be born and to die in your faith, it can be that in naked children who are born so, that you saw [it] and in those who climb up onto the gallows and are higher than other people ..." (Vilov 1741:10).

of the Son. And so on. Is it not against natural reason to speak in that way?" (Vilov 1741:33).

On the examples of the religious polemics in Gučetić's sermons (1743) and the dialogical-edifying booklet by Stjepan Vilov (1741) proving of the truth and correctness of only one faith and Church, insistence on the inescapability of the choice of the one and only right and correct faith (*either - or*), is shown in the context of Christian teachings in the 18th century as a logical phenomenon with consequences which were far-reaching in the field of popularisation of theological polemics among the broadest strata of members of the Western and Eastern Churches. This was demonstrated both by Kačić's poems and by the decasyllabic verses composed in the mid-nineteenth century.

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